

Message Text

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ACTION IO-10

INFO OCT-01 CIAE-00 CU-02 INR-07 NSAE-00 USIA-06 EUR-12

ISO-00 NEA-10 SS-15 NSC-05 SP-02 /070 W

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P 151113Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1212

INFO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV PRIORITY

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 18135

NESCO

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: AORG, UNESCO

SUBJECT: UNESCO VISIT JERUSALEM

REF: (A) PARIS 17561, (B) JERUSALEM 1107

1. IN SEPARATE CONVERSATIONS WITH PERMDEL, BOLLA AND FOGES DISCUSSED JUST CONCLUDED MISSION TO JERUSALEM. UNABLE TALK TO CONTON WHO OUT OF TOWN UNTIL JULY 19. BOLLA SAID THAT HE AND CONTON HAD BEEN INVITED TO THE ISRAELI MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS FOR MEETINGS WITH BAR YACOV AND MADAME LAMBERT. THE MEETINGS WERE CORDIAL IF IMPRECISE. BOLLA SAYS THE ISRAELIS EMPHASIZED THEY HAD NOTHING AGAINST UNESCO AND THAT ISRAEL DID NOT WISH TO DO ANYTHING TO DESTROY THE ORGANIZATION. HOWEVER, THEY EMPHASIZED THAT ISRAEL COULD NEVER ACCEPT THE RESOLUTIONS PASSED BY THE GENERAL CONFERENCE. BOLLA SAID THE ISRAELIS INDICATED A WISH TO CONTINUE THE DIALOGUE WITH UNESCO AND THAT OTHER REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ORGANIZATION WOULD BE WELCOMED SO LONG AS THEY DID NOT COME UNDER THE TERMS OF THE RESOLUTIONS. THE ISRAELIS WOULD NOT ACCEPT ANY PRIVATE FACT-FINDING TEAMS.

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2. BOLLA SIADSAID HE WES THEN TAKEN TO LUNCH WITH

AMBASSADOR KIDRON AND THE DISCUSSIONS CONTINUED GENERALLY ALONG THE SAME LINES. BOLLA WAS INVITED TO VISIT THE EXCAVATIONS AND CONTON ASKED TO VISIT THE SCHOOL AT RAMALLAH ON THE WEST BANK. PERMISSION WAS GRANTED FOR THE VISIT TO THE SCHOOL AND IT WENT OFF WELL.

3. AFTER THE MEETINGS BOLLA WALKED THROUGH THE CITY AND LOOKED AT THE EXCAVATIONS, WHICH HE SAYS ARE STILL IN PROGRESS. BOLLA SAYS THE EXCAVATIONS SEEM CLEARLY TO BE PART OF A LONG-TERM DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR THE CITY AND HE SAW NO EVIDENCE THAT THE ISRAELIS PLANNED TO STOP. HE SAID HE WAS TOLD THAT ARCHEOLOGISTS WERE MAKING "REMARKABLE DISCOVERIES". BOLLA SAID THAT IT SEEMED AS IF THE EXCAVATING NEAR THE MOSQUE HAD SLOWED DOWN BUT HAD NOT STOPPED. BOLLA SAID HE IS CONVINCED THAT THE OVERALL PLAN FOR THE CITY INCLUDES CONTINUING EXCAVATIONS AND ALSO ERECTING APARTMENT COMPLEXES, WHICH WILL INCREASE THE ISRAELI PRESENCE IN AND AROUND THE CITY. BOLLA WAS GLOOMY OVER ANY PROSPECTS THAT THE ISRAELIS WILL HALT OR SUSPEND EXCAVATIONS.

4. FOBES ASSESSMENT PARALLELED THAT OF BOLLA. FOBES SAID HE DOUBTED THAT THE BOLLA VISIT HAD PRODUCED ENOUGH INFORMATION FOR THE DG TO REPORT TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD. THERE IS NOTHING ON THE TENTATIVE AGENDA THAT WOULD INCLUDE A REPORT ON JERUSALEM, BUT IT WAS POSSIBLE A

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ACTION IO-10

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MEMBER COULD REQUEST A REPORT. FOBES' OVERALL ASSESSMENT IS THAT THE VISIT WAS "NEUTRAL"; THAT NOTHING POSITIVE WAS ACCOMPLISHED OTHER THAN TO BEGIN A DIALOGUE. FOBES DID NOT WISH TO SPECULATE ON FOLLOW UP STEPS SUCH AS ANOTHER VISIT BY LEMAIRE. HE SAID HE HAD NOT BEEN PRESENT WHEN BOLLA REPORTED TO THE DG AND HE DID NOT KNOW WHAT THE REACTION OF M'BOW WAS OR WOULD BE. M'BOW IS NOW VISITING AUSTRALIA AND WILL NOT RETURN UNTIL NEXT MONDAY EVENING.

5. COMMENT: THE VISIT OF BOLLA AND CONTON WAS VERY LOW KEY AND UNSENSATIONAL. PERMREP WILL ATTEMPT TO TALK WITH CONTON ABOUT THE EDUCATION IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES, BUT EVIDENTLY NOTHING OF GREAT NOTE OCCURRED ON THIS MATTER. THE IMPORTANT THING SEEMS TO BE THAT A CORDIAL CONTACT WAS MADE BETWEEN TOP LEVEL REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNESCO SECRETARIATE AND GOI. THE FACT THAT BOLLA AND CONTON WERE IMMEDIATELY CONTACTED AND MET WITH IS ENCOURAGING. ALSO, THERE WAS EVIDENTLY LITTLE PRESS PLAY AND THIS CAN BE HELPFUL AS THE DG IS VERY SENSITIVE TO CRITICISM IN THE ISRAELI PRESS. WHAT THE DG WILL DECIDE IS SPECULATIVE. HOPEFULLY, THERE WILL BE A CONTINUING DIALOGUE LEADING TO A GRADUAL LESSENING OF TENSION. HOWEVER, IT IS CLEAR THAT LITTLE
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CAN BE EXPECTED WHICH MIGHT LEAD TO THE DG SOFTENING THE IMPACT OF THE RESOLUTIONS. IT IS HIGHLY DOUBTFUL IF THIS IS POSSIBLE UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH INDICATE EXCAVATIONS ARE CONTINUING AND ARE PART OF A LARGER DEVELOPMENT PLAN. UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES IT IS QUITE SURE THAT THE ARABS/MOSELMS MEMBER STATES WOULD NOT PERMIT ANY LESSENING OF THE SANCTIONS IMPOSED. THE BEST THAT CAN BE EXPECTED IS THAT THE JERUSALEM ISSUE WILL REMAIN DORMANT. ANY EFFORT TO FORCE MATTERS WILL PROBABLY LEAD ONLY TO MORE CONFLICT, RHETORIC AND VOLATILE PRESS COVERAGE. THE BEST TACTIC WOULD SEEM TO BE TO TRY TO KEEP THE LID ON THE PRESSURE COOKER; CONTINUE A LOW-KEY DIALOGUE, AVOID ALL PRESS COVERAGE; AND TRY TO KEEP THE JERUSALEM ITEM OFF THE AGENDA OF THE EXBD.
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